

Archetype & Identity

A Personal Statement Writing Workshop
"Put your Story on Summer Simmer"

The Consensus on Personal Statements: Convey the Heart and Soul of You!

Archetype

A Symbol Universally Recognized by All

Jung

Carl Jung (1875-1961) is a Swiss psychiatrist who explored the human psyche in depth through dreams, art, and mythology. He contributed the concept of Psychological Archetypes.

Archetypes

Archetypes can be recognized in image and emotion. They re-appear across time and continents.

Archetypes are universal forms that channel experiences and emotions, resulting in recognizable and typical patterns of behavior with certain probable outcomes. (*A Critical Dictionary of Jungian Analysis*, Samuels, Shorter and Plaut.) In fictional narratives, it is assumed characters with strong archetypal features will automatically and unconsciously resonate with a large audience.

In writing about yourself, if you connect to an archetype, you will connect with your reader.

Identity

Erik Erikson (1902-1994) is a Danish-German-American development psychologist concerned with the development of Identity.

While adolescence is a stage at which we are neither a child nor an adult, life is definitely getting more complex as we attempt to find our own identity, struggle with social interactions, and grapple with moral issues.

Our task is to discover who we are as individuals separate from our family of origin and as members of a wider society.

Matching Game

Many literary characters, and authors, are widely known in speech

He is a *Scrooge*

Impulsive, a dreamer

She is *quixotic*

Rags to riches, happy ending

He's a *Robin Hood*

Frustrating, illogical

It is a *Cinderella* story

Stingy, mean

A *Kafkaesque* experience

He is a romantic

He is a *Romeo*

Champion for the poor

Catalog of Archetypes

Jungian Archetypes

The Shadow = Darth Vader

The Magician = Gandalf

Earth Mother = Demeter

The Maiden = Princess Leia
The Hero = Luke Skywalker

Mythical Archetypes

Zeus & Athena -- Adam & Eve
Sisyphus, Odysseus
Aphrodite
Narcissus, Achilles, Oedipus

Tarot Archetypes

The Fool
The Devil
The Hermit

Popular Archetypes

Reluctant Messiah (Matrix, Spider-Man, Dr. Manhattan)
Maverick (James T. Kirk, Watchmen)
Rebel / Outlaw
Superstar (sports, music, movies, American Idol)
Victim / Nerd
Prodigy / "Boy Wonder"

Literary Archetypes

Peter Pan & Wendy
Romeo
Don Quixote
Alice (in Wonderland)
Huck Finn
Cinderella
Robin Hood
Jo Marsh
Frankenstein

Activity:

Look at images of a variety of archetypes.

Which statements are true when you look at the image?

One or more of these statements is true:

I feel drawn to this archetype
This archetype is beautiful or interesting
I feel a connection to this archetype
This archetype resonates with me
I relate to this archetype
I want to know more about this archetype
I feel inspired by this archetype

One or more of these statements is true:

I am afraid of this archetype
This archetype freaks me out
I don't relate to this archetype
This archetype is ugly or repulsive
This reminds me of someone I don't like
It made me think of something disturbing
I feel scared when I look at this one

Connecting to Archetypes (Worksheet)

Which archetype(s) did you feel a positive connection to?

Which archetype(s) did you feel a negative reaction to?

Which archetype(s) do you want to read about or learn more about?

Share.

Do you or anyone you know fit these descriptions?

Archetypal Literary Characters

Pollyanna (title character)	Optimist; looks at the bright side
Frodo (Lord of the Rings)	Curious; undertaking a quest
Juliet (Romeo and Juliet)	Idealist; bucking tradition
Iago (Othello)	Villain; deceptive
Tom Sawyer (title character)	Carefree; adventurous
Holden Caulfield (Catcher in the Rye)	Disillusioned; cynical
Jo Marsh (Little Women)	Tomboy; non-traditional
The Queen (Snow White)	Jealous; tricky

Share.

You as the Protagonist

You are the main character of your life story!

Traits that describe you:

A character you relate to:

An archetype that fits you:

Story

Brazilian novelist Paulo Coelho (author of *The Alchemist*) says there are only **two stories in the world:**

The Voyage of Discovery

Stranger Comes to Town

Examples:

Falling Down the Rabbit Hole (Alice, Coraline)

Hero's Journey (Jonah, Frodo)

Setting

Time, place, character, family, society

Example: *Huckleberry Finn*, 1800s, Mississippi River, Widow Douglass, Jim (slave)

Motifs

Repetition or pattern that develops a theme (idea, object, place, or statement)

Examples: Big Brother, Witches, Illness, Stormy weather, the Ring, the Forest

Themes

A message about life, society, or human nature

Examples:

Standing up for your ideals (fighting racism) -- (*To Kill a Mockingbird*)

Star-Crossed Lovers (*Romeo and Juliet*)

The American Dream (*The Great Gatsby*)

Story Arc (plot graph)

http://www.infoplease.com/images/cig/writing-well/0028636945_img_2825.png

Story Worksheet

Setting:

How would you describe your world?

(location, politics, economy, environment, family, time in history, ancestral background, influence of friends, etc.)

Genre:

If the story of your life were shelved in a bookstore, what section would it be in?

(mystery, comedy, tragedy, adventure, sci-fi, romance, superhero comics)

Title:

What title would you give your life?

Journey:

What kind of journey have you had? Where are you on your path to discovery?

Events:

What are some memorable or life-changing things that have happened to you?

Conflict/Task:

What are some goals or desires you have? What has blocked you?

How have you overcome adversities?

Interests:

What has continued to hold your interest over the years?

Ending:

What would be a good ending to your story?

Connecting to a Parallel Story

Why use this technique?

1. Add another layer of meaning to deepen understanding
2. Shortcut -- don't have to do as much explaining
3. Sound literary

Sample Comparisons:

1.
When my father was transferred across the country and we moved suddenly in the summer of my sophomore year, I felt like **Alice** falling down the rabbit hole.

What is implied? What do we know about what she was experiencing?

2.
I was the first kid in my middle school to have a growth spurt. I shot up six inches in seventh grade and kept on going. Did I ever feel like the **Ugly Duckling**? I tripped on the stairs and bumped into poles. Fortunately, knowing the ending of that tale gave me the confidence to ignore jeers and become the disciplined basketball player that I am today.

What do we know about the story of the *Ugly Duckling*?

3.

When I was a little girl I rejected dolls, but I loved to collect fossils. The dead bugs in my room drove my neatnik mother crazy! Why couldn't I be a normal princess? In my freshman year I heard about **Marie Curie** and I announced to my family my dream of becoming a scientist. But they laughed at me. We didn't know any "lady scientists." I felt like **Beneatha** in Lorraine Hansberry's play ***A Raisin in the Sun***.

What was it like for Beneatha?

Summer Simmer

1. Reading

Focus on archetypal stories and characters

Fill in gaps in literature, mythology

2. A Way of Seeing

Look at yourself as a protagonist (deepen your understanding of self)

Frame your experiences with universal, dramatic themes

3. Keep a Journal

Jot down dreams, ideas, lessons, discoveries to use later

Next Steps: A Guide for Completing your Personal Statement

1. Brainstorm: Relaxed, creative unconscious insights over the summer

2. Approach: Shape, voice, story, style

3. Write: Respond to prompts, get it in writing

4. Share: Ask for feedback from friends, family, etc.

5. Edit: Organization, copyediting, word choice, style, panache

For more materials and videos over the summer, visit:

ecBerkeley.org

Prompt #1 (freshman applicants)

Describe the world you come from — for example, your family, community or school — and tell us how your world has shaped your dreams and aspirations.

Prompt #2 (all applicants)

Tell us about a personal quality, talent, accomplishment, contribution or experience that is important to you. What about this quality or accomplishment makes you proud and how does it relate to the person you are?

Summer Reading List

Stories of Greek and Roman mythology
Grimm's Fairy Tales by the Brothers Grimm
Hans Christian Andersen's Fairy Tales

Novels with Young People as Protagonists

Peter and Wendy by J.M. Barrie
Huckleberry Finn by Mark Twain
Little Women by Louisa May Alcott
Alice's Adventures in Wonderland by Lewis Carroll
To Kill a Mockingbird by Harper Lee
The Catcher in the Rye by J.D. Salinger
Oliver Twist by Charles Dickens

Shakespeare Plays

Romeo and Juliet ... Othello ... Hamlet

Novels

Frankenstein by Mary Shelley
Lord of the Rings by J.R.R. Tolkien
Jane Eyre by Charlotte Brontë
The Merry Adventures of Robin Hood by Howard Pyle
Crime and Punishment by Fyodor Dostoyevsky
The Great Gatsby by F. Scott Fitzgerald
Siddhartha by Herman Hesse
Brave New World by Aldous Huxley
Animal Farm by George Orwell
The Invisible Man by H.G. Wells

Autobiographies

The Diary of a Young Girl by Anne Frank

Black Boy by Richard Wright
The Story of My Life by Helen Keller
The Autobiography of Malcolm X by Alex Haley

This is just a "starter" list. See ecBerkeley.org for an expanding reading list.